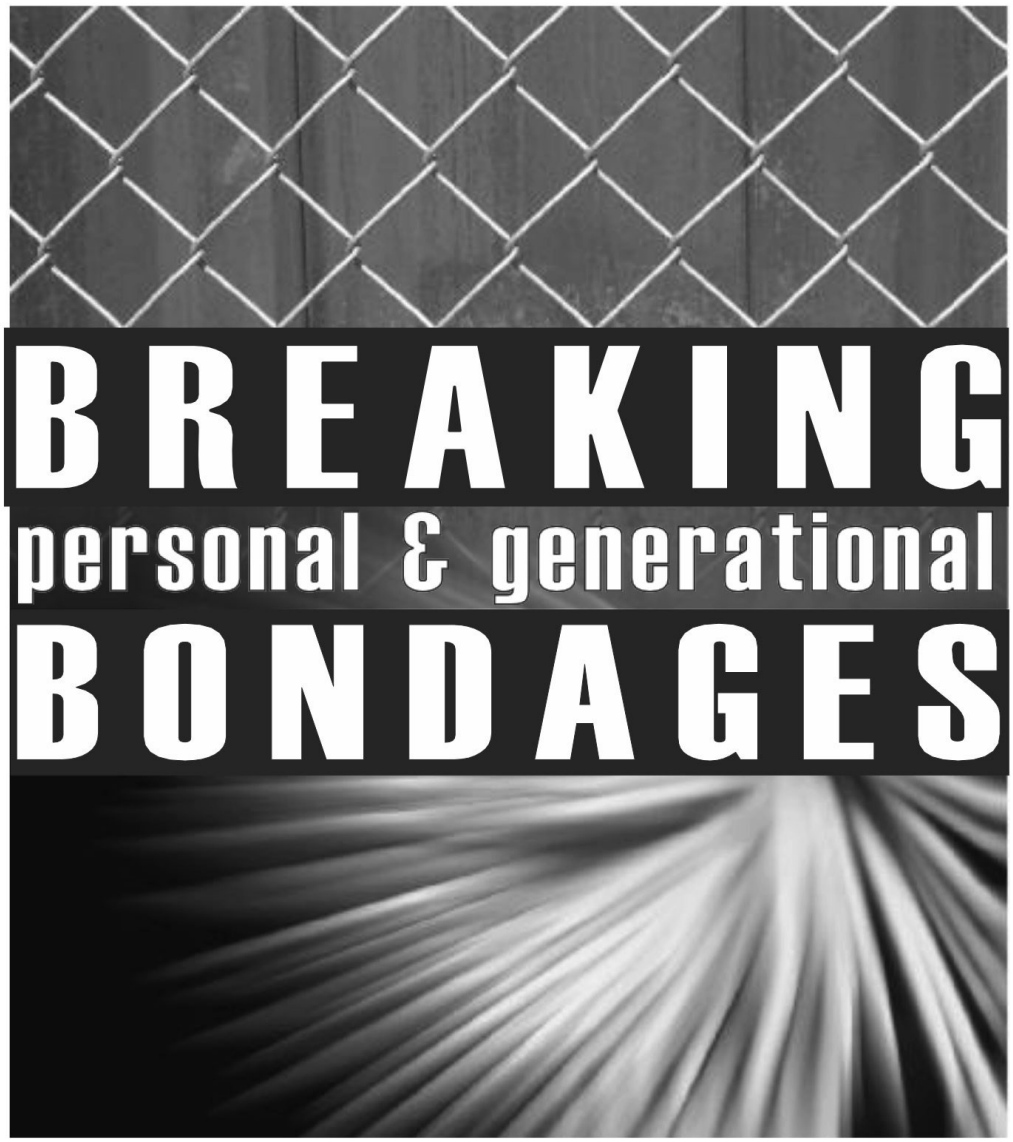

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BREAKING
personal & generational
BONDAGES

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INTRODUCTION

Some of the problems people face may have their origins in previous generations. Some of this may have been caused by someone who led a sinful lifestyle or had been involved in demonic activity, in a previous generation. For instance, in a family, the grandfather may have experienced bankruptcy, and this may have passed on to one of his sons. This son may have had children and some of them might have also become bankrupt. So, generation after generation, one or more people may have been affected with the same type of problem.

Consider another example where the grandfather may have been a deep-rooted alcoholic. His son also becomes an alcoholic later in life and this is passed on to the third generation. There may be a pattern where all of them struggle with the same problem. There may be something in the family tree—and not merely in the individual—that produces such patterns, generation after generation. What could be the cause of such recurring problems—lifestyle behavior, life experiences, calamities, and so on? Do such problems that repeat in generations have spiritual causes? If so, one must go deeper than simply attempting to deal with the symptoms. One would have to deal with the root cause which could be spiritual in nature.

Examples Of Generational Bondages

Some problems that we face in our lives could be due to generational bondages—sinful behavior and lifestyle patterns like lying, cheating, anger, violence, gambling, alcoholism, drug dependence, adultery, immorality, destructive personality, abuse, suicidal tendency, being a workaholic, and the like. The list could go on. Other problems in life—recurring illnesses, divorce, financial bankruptcy, repeated failure in business, failures in other areas, depression, mental/emotional breakdown, irrational fear, insecurity, poor self-image, rejection, poverty, eating disorders, children born out of wedlock, physical or emotional dysfunction, barrenness, miscarriages, recurring accidents, being "accident prone," and unnatural or untimely deaths could also be due to what we refer to as "generational bondages."

Not A Universal Remedy

Before we proceed further in this study, we must understand that dealing with the generational bondages that we may have, is not a solution for every problem that we

face. Understanding and breaking generational bondages does not necessarily solve all of life's problems. A problem may not always be caused by a generational bondage. For instance, the reason someone has a constant headache could simply be because he is not sleeping adequately and not because of a generational bondage! So, it is necessary for us to be careful before concluding that something is a generational bondage. We should not treat this as the only thing there is to know and live by. There may be other factors that are causing the problem.

Other Factors Involved

While certain sinful behavior patterns are passed on from one generation to another, there can be several other factors involved. In addition to spiritual reasons, there could also be personal, genetic, and environmental factors. For example, the reason someone has a problem with drug dependency may not be because someone in a previous generation had it but simply because that individual has adopted a wrong kind of lifestyle, due to wrong influence.

The Need To Know And Apply This Truth

However, it is important for us to understand what generational bondages are and know how to apply this truth, so that if a generational bondage is the root cause of a problem, we will know what to do to find a permanent solution. As long as we are unable to deal with the root cause of a problem, we will never have a permanent solution for it. We need to apply this both for ourselves and while ministering to others.

Ephesians 6:12
For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Our conflict is not with "flesh and blood"—not with people—but with spiritual wickedness, demonic forces, powers of darkness, the devil, and his demons that are trying to assault us and come against us. There is a spiritual conflict involved. Hence, some of the problems we face have a spiritual origin.

The Word of God warns us not to give any foothold to the devil—"*Nor give place to the devil*" (Ephesians 4:27). We must be careful not to give him any kind of access. It is important for us to know how the devil operates and gains access into our lives. Only then will we know how to resist the devil successfully. If we are unable to accurately determine how the devil enters into our lives, we will be unaware of how to keep him out of our lives. If we do not deal with the root of the problem, it will be like "shadow fighting"—fighting with the shadow instead of the real person.

Terms And Terminology

In most of the Christian world, the terms “family curse” and “generational curse” are used. In this book, we do not use the word “curse.” Instead, we use the word “bondage,” only because we feel that it is more comprehensive and describes the nature of the problem accurately. The word “curse” usually refers to a vocal pronouncement; something that has been spoken over our lives. However, we are dealing with areas of bondage where the enemy has gained access into a family line and holds captive different individuals in that family tree through succeeding generations. Sometimes, the terms “family curse,” “generational curse,” and “generational bondage” may be used interchangeably. However, the important thing is to understand the truth and apply it in our lives, regardless of the terminology we prefer to use.

1. WHAT IS A GENERATIONAL BONDAGE?

Exodus 20:3–6
3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.
4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;
5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,
6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

The Lord gives two commands. The first is that there can be no other gods but Him, and the second is that no one should bow down before any graven image. The Lord also mentions the consequences of violating these commands and says that the iniquity will continue down the generations, till the third and fourth generations. Here, we see that if a particular generation bows down to false gods and idols, it opens the door for "iniquity" to enter their lives and pass on to the following generations. We refer to this as "generational bondage."

This is the first time where the concept of generational bondage is mentioned. It is important to note that this was being conveyed by God Himself. Hence, the concept of generational bondage was not a "notion" held by people who were held in fear, or by leaders who tried to manipulate people through fear. It was the Lord God who warned His people about iniquity passing on from generation to generation.

These thoughts are repeated in at least four other places. Therefore, we are not developing a theology based on an isolated instance in the Bible. Here are the other places in Scripture where this is repeated:

Exodus 34:7
Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.

Numbers 14:18
The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.

Deuteronomy 5:9
You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me.

Jeremiah 32:18
You show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

Idol Worship

Idol worship is wrong! God forbids the worship of an idol. We are not supposed to worship any graven, paper, electronic image, or anything else. We are to worship the true and living God, in spirit and in truth. So, we can ask some important questions:

- Why is it wrong to bow before an idol or an image—whether of Jesus, some saint, or anything else?
- Why is it wrong to worship a picture of Jesus?

Let us consider what the Scripture has to say, about worshipping idols.

1 Corinthians 10:19–22
19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything?
20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.
21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.
22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

According to the Scripture, an idol is not of any significance. However, things that are sacrificed in the worship of idols are really being sacrificed to demons, and not to the living God. And this leads one into fellowship with demons, giving demonic powers an entrance into their lives. When we praise and worship God, we have fellowship with the living God, and He has entry into our hearts and lives. In a similar way, when someone bows down and worships idols and offers sacrifices, they begin to fellowship with demonic powers associated with those idols, giving access to those powers into their lives.

A Word of Caution

We need to speak the truth in love and meekness, when we share these truths with our friends, who may be holding idols in reverence.

Proverbs 16:21
The wise in heart will be called prudent, and sweetness of the lips increases learning.

In Deuteronomy 7, God gives specific instructions to His people about idols.

Deuteronomy 7:25-26
25 You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not covet the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it is an abomination to the LORD your God.
26 Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.

God warns His people about taking an accursed thing into their homes. They were not allowed to even bring the precious jewelry that may have adorned the statues. Such things were an abomination to God—something God detested. Those who took the accursed things would be held in bondage by the powers associated with the idols. Bondage and destruction will gain entrance into their lives. This is another reason why idol worship is wrong. The powers that are behind the idol will hold us in bondage and we will be doomed to the same destruction as the idol if we disobey God's instructions on the matter.

We become like what we worship. "*Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them*" (Psalm 115:8). We assume the likeness of the object of our worship. When we bow down and serve an idol, the spirit that operates through that idol gains a foothold (an area of influence) into our lives and holds us in bondage, making us bow to it repeatedly. This in turn passes on from us to our children and to their descendants, down through our family tree, causing them to bow down to it.

Personal Bondage Versus Generational Bondage

The iniquity which we may have given access to in our lives, that may affect us today is what we will refer to as "personal bondage." If we do not break its power over our lives, it has the potential to pass on to our succeeding generations. If it does pass on to succeeding generations, we refer to it as a "generational bondage." Some could be suffering under a generational bondage, which they have inherited, and not necessarily something they have allowed into their lives. As stated earlier, these bondages could be a wide variety of things—sinful behavior and lifestyle patterns like lying, cheating, anger, violence, gambling, alcoholism, drug dependence, adultery, immorality, destructive personality, abuse, suicidal tendency, being a workaholic, and so on. Other problems in life—recurring illnesses, divorce, financial bankruptcy, repeated failures in business, failures in other areas, depression, mental/ emotional breakdown, irrational fear, insecurity, poor self-image, rejection, poverty, eating disorders, children born out of wedlock, physical or emotional dysfunction, barrenness, miscarriages, recurring accidents, being "accident prone," and unnatural or untimely deaths, and the like, could also be due to bondages.

Our purpose here is to learn how to break such personal and generational bondages.

Covetousness Is Idolatry

The Old Testament refers to bowing down to images and idols as idolatry. However, in the New Testament it takes on a slightly broader picture where covetousness is also mentioned as a form of idolatry.

Colossians 3:5
Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Ephesians 5:5
For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Any form of covetousness or uncontrollable lust is equivalent to idolatry. For instance, if someone has an uncontrollable desire—an addiction—that is also considered idolatry and has the same consequences. Addictions include substance abuse, pornography, alcohol, an immoral lifestyle, and so on. The same spirits associated with idolatry can become operational and hold the person in bondage. So even though we may not actually have idols in our homes, we need to examine if there is covetousness in our hearts.

Generational Blessing

On the other hand, the Bible teaches us about generational blessing. A great example of generational blessing can be seen in the life of Abraham, where God tells him that he and all his descendants after him will receive a blessing.

Genesis 17:7
And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

Isaiah 59:21
"As for Me," says the LORD, "this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the LORD, "from this time and forevermore."

A covenant made with the true and living God brought a generational blessing into effect.

2. Iniquity And Sin

Iniquity Versus Sin

Understanding the words "iniquity" and "sin" will help us understand generational bondages better. Both words are used in Scripture:

Exodus 34:9
Then he said, "If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we are a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance."

The root word for "iniquity" in Hebrew is '*avon*' which means perversity whereas for "sin" it is '*khatawaw*' which means offence. In general, we can make an observation that "iniquity" has to do with one's nature, something within us that causes us to commit acts of sin, while "sin" is the act of doing wrong. It is the deed that misses the mark or violates God's command.

Iniquity Passed Down Through Generations

God said that it was iniquity that was passed on from generation to generation. Someone commits a sin but the iniquity that motivated that person to sin is what is passed on through the generations. In Lamentations 5, we read that the iniquity that caused the fathers to sin was passed onto their children.

Lamentations 5:7
Our fathers sinned and are no more, but we bear their iniquities.

Jeremiah 32:17-18
17 'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.
18 You show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

Psalm 51:5
Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

Even from the time we were born, iniquity was passed on to us.

Is God Being Just In Allowing This?

It seems unfair that one could suffer the consequence of what an ancestor might have done in a preceding generation. How does one explain this?

It might appear that God is unjust in having the iniquity of the fathers affect children, grandchildren, and so on. Further we do read in other places where God makes it very clear that the soul who sins will die. Look at the two scriptures:

Deuteronomy 24:16
Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

Ezekiel 18:1–4,20
1 The Word of the Lord came to me again, saying,
2 "What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?'
3 "As I live," says the Lord God, "you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel.
4 Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father, as well as the soul of the son is Mine; the soul who sins shall die.
20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

The fathers will not be put to death for their children. Each one will be put to death for their own sin. Here, the word for "sin" in Hebrew is from the root word '*khate,*' which means "crime."

This could be confusing. When there are at least five verses that say that the iniquity will be passed on to the children and to their children, these two verses seem almost contradictory. We need to recollect the difference between "iniquity" and "sin," to get a better understanding.

God Is A Just God

God is a just God. There is no questioning the fact that God is just and there is no injustice with Him. We need to understand the difference between the "penalty" as meted out by the judicial system and the "consequence," the repercussions of a wrong deed. The penalty for sin will be borne by the individual who sinned. The consequence of that sin could impact more lives than just the person who sinned.

Consider the example of a family where the father works as a top official in a large firm. The father embezzles large amounts of money and is convicted by the law of the land and is sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment. Although he alone bears the penalty for the

sin, which is 10 years of imprisonment, his entire family—his wife, all his children, and even his grandchildren—may have to bear the consequence of his crime. The family members would go through a lot of emotional pain and the reputation of the family could become tainted. The consequences are more extensive than the penalty.

In Deuteronomy 24 and Ezekiel 18, God refers to the penalty of sin—"*the soul who sins will die*"—but in all the other five references (Exodus 20:3–6; Exodus 34:7; Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:9; Jeremiah 32:18) where we read about iniquity being passed on from one generation to the next, the reference is to the consequences of sin. There are certain sins (e.g., idol worship) for which one not only bears the penalty for that sin, but also faces a higher consequence. A door is opened to demonic activity which is passed on from one generation to the next. Each generation will experience the consequence of this. So, God is being just when He punishes the penalty of the wicked, although the consequences of that person's sin will be passed on to his or her descendants. God will not intervene and stop it, unless someone takes authority and claims freedom by breaking the bondage that has been initiated. We must do what the Word of God says, to be set free.

3. WHAT OPENS DOORS TO FAMILY BONDAGES?

Curses Have A Cause

Proverbs 26:2
Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, So a curse without cause shall not alight.

Curses have a cause. They do not just happen. Sparrows and swallows do not fly about in random but are guided by an "internal compass." Similarly, curses do not just alight by accident; there is usually a reason for a curse. So, when we are aware of how curses operate, we will know how to take necessary precautions to prevent them. Let us consider some of the causes that open the door to iniquity in our lives, causing generational bondages.

Worship of Idols or False gods

This has been examined earlier in the book. Iniquity will be passed on to future generations when one bows down and worships false gods (Exodus 20:5).

Sacrifices or Dedications

When someone sacrifices or makes a dedication, of either their child or family, to something that has a demonic influence—it could be a false god or goddess—it opens the door to family bondages.

Vows

A vow is a solemn promise by which a person binds himself to an act, service, or condition. Vows that are negative, sinful, and are directly or indirectly made to demons, open the door to demonic activity and bondage. For example, if a person makes a vow before an idol, to do something if a particular prayer is answered, the vow could open the door to a generational bondage.

Sinful Deeds

Sin that is not confessed remains an open door that gives entry to demonic activity. A good example is that of King David (2 Samuel 12), who in his desire to have Bathsheba committed murder and adultery. Nathan the prophet warned David that the sword will

not depart from his family because of that sinful deed.

2 Samuel 12:9–13
9 Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.
10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'
11 Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.
12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'
13 So David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' And Nathan said to David, 'The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.'

The word "sword" refers to destruction, violence, and death. By his sinful deed, David opened the door to destruction, violence, and death in his family. David's son, Ammon raped his own sister and committed incest. His other son, Absalom led a rebellion against his own father.

A sinful act has its consequence; sometimes lasting longer than we could imagine. For example, the willful act of abortion could open the door to an iniquity of destruction where things begin to get destroyed. When someone commits an abortion, they could open the door to a spirit of death leading to loss in other areas, for example business, finances, and so on. Sin that is not confessed remains as an open door for demonic activity. It is vital for us to confess, repent, and forsake sin in our lives. It is our responsibility to overpower sin that may be waiting to enter our lives. We need to shut the door to any kind of demonic activity.

Genesis 4:7
If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.

In Genesis 4:7, God spoke to Cain when he was terribly upset and ready to kill his brother. God warned him about the sin that was waiting at the door and trying to enter in. God asked him to overpower it. But Cain allowed sin to enter and became a murderer.

Traumatic Events or Experiences

Negative reactions to emotional wounds could open the door to unexplained fears in our lives, that may continue in the following generations. For instance, someone who has been in a car crash could be so emotionally disturbed that a spirit of fear could gain access into that person's life. That person may be so fearful to travel on the road, and may feel unsafe to even sit inside a car again. This fear may even pass on to subsequent generations and may even manifest as fears in other areas. Loss of a loved one, abuse,

witnessing tragic events could be examples of other traumatic experiences that lead people into bondages.

Curses and Witchcraft

Curses and witchcraft obviously open the door to generational bondages in our lives. There are at least three ways by which they become operational.

Self-Inflicted Curses

Unknowingly, our words could be the basis of self-inflicted curses. We may say certain things under extreme pressure, anger, hatred, hurt, and disappointment. Saying negative things about our own body, our looks, emotions, and the like could put a curse on us. Such self-inflicted curses could hinder our ability to interact with people and enjoy certain experiences in life. Examples are:

- "I will not be like my father or mother" (someone who has unhappy recollections of his childhood).
- "I will never have children" (someone who works in a preschool or children's church and has had a tough time with children).
- "My children are so terrible" (when parents keep stating that their children are terrible, they may just turn out to be terrible).
- "I will never allow myself to enjoy sex" (victims of sexual and physical abuse).
- "I hate men (women)."
- "I will never let another man (woman) get close to me again" (after a broken relationship).

Curses Taken on by Previous Generations

Curses could have been willingly taken on by a previous generation and thereby succeeding generations are affected.

Matthew 27:25
And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

Spells/Witchcraft Done on Individuals/Family Members

Individuals who dabble in the occult may willfully place spells either on individuals or entire families, and this opens the door to generational bondages.

Presence of a Family Heritage (object) that Is an Abomination

What may be considered as a wonderful piece of family heirloom that every member of the family desires to have, may in effect bring a curse, if it had been dedicated to a false god in some occult practice. Being ignorant of the background of an object and bringing it home and decorating our homes with it, could lead to bondage.

Deuteronomy 7:25-26
25 You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not covet the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. 26 Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.

The Decisions of Heads of Families (Fathers)

Decisions that fathers make are very important because they are the spiritual heads of their families. Many times, ancestral bondages are due to involvement in the occult and in certain religious organizations. What may seem like a harmless visit to an astrologer may in effect open the door to a generational bondage. Involvement in astrology, palm reading, horoscopes, hypnosis, freemasonry, wearing of amulets, birthstones, charms, and the like, by the head of the family, could open the door to demonic activity in the lives of the children and may be passed on to subsequent generations.

4. Recognizing Personal And Family Bondages

John 10:10
The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

God wants us to have an abundant life—life to the maximum. It is the devil that steals, kills, and destroys.

Having understood the different ways that family bondages affect a family, we need to investigate our own lives and our own families to see if there are signs of a generational bondage. Let us perform a spiritual inventory of our lives and then take action to destroy any personal and generational bondage that may exist.

The Cause And Effect May Not Always Be Directly Related

We need to realize that the cause and effect may not always be related. For example, there may be a person who is unable to stay in a job. It is possible that every six months, this person takes on a new responsibility. In a situation like this, one needs to take a closer look at what could be the real cause. For example, we may discover that the person may be hostile to people and eventually ends up quarreling with people at the workplace. Hostility toward the colleagues may be the cause but the effect is that of not being able to hold onto a job. There could be a spirit of violence that is causing this person to become hostile toward colleagues and from connecting to people around.

Consider another example where there is a generational bondage of uncontrollable anger in a particular family. A young man in this family gets married and continues with this kind of behavior, resulting in the breakup of his own marriage that finally ends in divorce. The cause is a generational bondage of unnatural anger while the effect is the breakup of a marriage.

We must take the time and effort to examine our lives, and identify either personal or family bondages. Let us examine our lives and the lives of our families, to check if there are generational bondages. Let us think about each member of our extended families and try to identify a recurring pattern to identify if there are any improper behaviors or recurring problems. Probably, there could have been an untimely death in our grandfather's generation. Then an uncle may have also passed away in the prime of his youth, and now we may be living in fear of that happening in our generation. In case we

identify something that may seem like a generational bondage, we should shut the door. By doing so, let us ensure that it is not passed on to future generations. If we are guilty of something in our lives that could potentially open the door to bondage, we must repent, forsake, and walk free!

We Can Be Set Free!

The good news is that when we know the truth, the truth will make us free. Jesus Christ can set us free!

John 8:32,36
32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

5. How Can We Be Free From This?

Our Right To Be Free Was Obtained At The Cross

1 John 3:8
He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Our freedom was obtained at the cross. Jesus came to destroy every work of the devil, regardless of how it entered our lives. Why did Jesus come into this world? Jesus did not come to give us a new religion to follow or new philosophies to think about. He came to destroy every work of the devil in the lives of people. We do not have to tolerate the works of the devil in our lives.

There are many people in the world today who give us new philosophies, ideas, and religions. However, no one can stand up and say, "I can destroy the works of the devil." Jesus alone can do that.

Hebrews 2:14
Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.

Through His death, Jesus destroyed the one (the devil) who had the power of death and rendered him powerless. The cross was not a place of defeat, but the place of the greatest victory history has ever known! It was on the cross that Jesus defeated the devil. He did not need to do it for Himself, for He was, is, and always will be greater than the devil. He did it for us—as our representative and on our behalf.

Colossians 2:14-15
14 Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.
15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Principalities and powers are devils and demons. On the cross, Jesus disarmed them and rendered them powerless, completely triumphing over them.

Ephesians 6:12
For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the

rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Jesus disarmed satan and the demonic powers, rendered them powerless, and made a public show of His victory on the cross. This same Jesus can step into our world and set us totally free today, from any and every demonic bondage. What does this mean to you and me?

Colossians 1:13-14
13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love,
14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Thus, He has delivered us from the dominion or the authority of darkness (demons). From the moment we put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, satan has no legal claim over our lives, because we have been delivered and set free. We have been translated into a different kingdom, thus becoming citizens of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We are not citizens of the kingdom of satan, and so these powers of darkness have no authority over our lives and have no claim over our spirit, soul, and body. The only right that satan can have in our lives is through the access we give him. The Scripture warns us, "*nor give place to the devil*" (Ephesians 4:27). Therefore, keep the door closed. Do not give satan any entrance into your life!

The Power Of The Blood

1 Peter 1:18-19
18 Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

The epistle of Peter was addressed to mixed churches of Jewish and Gentile Christians, scattered throughout the Roman provinces of Asia Minor. Peter tells both Jewish and Gentile Christians that we have been redeemed from the aimless way of living, that was handed down from our ancestors. The redemption that Peter describes is freedom from the emptiness of pagan religions, superstitions, and pharisaic formalism.

The blood of Jesus has done many things for us—it washed our sins and redeemed us from the power of satan. The blood of Christ has also set us free from the vain manner of living of our forefathers, which had been handed down to us. Regardless of the ancestry or lifestyle of our forefathers that may have opened the door to demonic influence owing to certain forms of worship, the blood of Jesus Christ sets us free! The shed blood of Christ gives us the right to be free from any and every form of demonic bondage, sinful lifestyle, ungodly behavior patterns, vows, dedications, and curses of our ancestors.

The Prison Doors Are Open—You Must Walk Out To Freedom

The prison doors are open, but we must walk out to freedom. Jesus has done everything He needs to do, to set us free. His blood has been shed; He has destroyed the works of the devil and conquered satan. But we need to walk out through the door and accept and receive our freedom. Jesus said, "*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed*" (John 8:32,36). Ignorance keeps us in bondage. But knowing the truth gives us the opportunity to walk into freedom.

You Are Blessed!

Ephesians 1:3
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

God has blessed you with every blessing that comes from heaven. Every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven is yours, for God desires for you to be blessed! God is for you and not against you.

Shut All Doors Permanently

Matthew 12:43–45
43 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none.
44 Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order.
45 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

Jesus gives us an insight into how the enemy operates. When demons are expelled from the territory that they had occupied, they make attempts to return. That is why it is so important to keep the doors shut. For instance, if you had opened the door to pornography and have been led to repentance to break that bondage, but instead of keeping that door shut, you dabble in a little bit of pornography, you are likely to end up in a worse state than you were before. This is because when the enemy comes back, he comes back with greater intensity. When you renounce certain bondages, the enemy is likely to attack with greater intensity in the very same areas that you had decided to get rid of him. The effect of the cleansing lasts until demons are given the right to enter again, through continuous unrepentant sinning. We must permanently shut all doors that give demons access into our lives.

Repenting And Renouncing Our Own Sins And The Sins Of Our Forefathers

Leviticus 26:39–42
39 And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.
40 But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me,
41 and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt—
42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.

Here, God tells His people that the current generation could repent for the sins of the previous generation. We also find other examples in Scripture.

Jeremiah 14:20
We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You.

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel also repented for the sins committed by their forefathers. So, it is scriptural for you and me to pray and repent for the sins of our fathers and forefathers.

God-Appointed Structure Of Authority

There is a God-appointed structure of authority in the natural world that God works through, which the devil respects.

The Authority of the Husband or Father

1 Corinthians 11:3
But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

The head of the wife is the husband. The husband or father is the spiritual gatekeeper or watchman over his family. Spiritual authority flows along the lines of the authority structure that God has put in place. It is up to the husband to either allow or disallow the influence of the enemy in the house. He has the right and responsibility to protect his wife and family. Husbands must take their place of authority, shut the door, and declare to all demonic powers that they are forbidden to influence their wives and children.

The Authority of a Believing Spouse or Parent

1 Corinthians 7:14
For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

Thus, in the case of one spouse being an unbeliever, the believing spouse can exert spiritual influence over the unsaved spouse, in spiritual things. If you are a believer, you can make a difference because your faith has dominion over your unbelieving spouse. Even the children that have come out of this union come under the spiritual influence of the believing spouse.

The Authority of the Current Generation

Since we are the current representatives of our family line, we have authority over all vows, dedications, and agreements that were previously made as indicated in Leviticus 26:39–42.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. When I accept Christ as my personal Savior, I acknowledge that His blood cleanses me from all my sin. Why am I still under the iniquity of my forefathers? Does the blood of Jesus not cleanse iniquity too? When the Lord has redeemed me, does not His redemption include freedom from all bondages? Why do I need to explicitly deal with generational bondages?

When we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, we are truly born-again in our spirits and become new creatures. The blood of Jesus Christ washes our sins away. However, the problem is that the iniquity of our forefathers opened the door to demonic bondages that affect the realm of the soul—mind, will, and emotions—the body, and life experiences. When God saves us and washes us clean by the blood of Jesus, He does not change our soul, body, and our circumstances.

For example, if your hair had been graying when you received Christ, it is most likely to continue to gray, even after! Or if you were six feet tall before you were born-again, you will remain the same height after you have received Jesus into your life. In an instant you do become a new creation in the realm of your spirit, but many bondages in the realm of the soul, body, and life situations may continue to exist.

There are many believers who are washed and made righteous in God's sight but are still struggling with sinful habits, emotional problems, and the like. Therefore, one of the things that may need to be dealt with is generational bondage.

Q2. According to Exodus 20:5-6, God visits the iniquity of those who hate Him and extends mercy to those who love Him. I do not hate God. Instead I love Him, so why would I even need to be concerned about breaking family bondages?

The answer to this is similar to the first question. We love God with our hearts, and yet many times there could be areas of bondages in our soul and body; and works of the enemy in our life situations that God is asking us to specifically deal with. God did not say, "I will resist the devil on your behalf." Instead, He said, "You resist the devil."

Q3. Can I not be the initiator of generational blessing unless I have done away with the generational bondage?

When you come into Christ, you automatically become a propagator of the blessing of Abraham and the blessing associated with who you are in Christ. So, you initiate and

propagate generational blessings to your descendants, though you may still carry your own generational bondages that need to be dealt with. However, the degree to which you will impact your succeeding generations depends greatly on the level of your obedience to God; in the way you live your life. If you are lazy and think, "I'm saved. I've got my 'fire insurance.' That's enough for me! I'll go to heaven," and "float" through life, then you may not have much of an impact, spiritually, on your succeeding generations. But if you are somebody who will press into God and go after the things of God—His Spirit and His Word—then you will have a greater impact on your succeeding generations.

Q4. Can I stand in the gap for my whole family and seek His forgiveness, or should every individual family member do this personally?

God works through the authority structure that He has set in place. By virtue of that authority structure, you can have some degree of influence on family members who are preceding you but the maximum impact of your spiritual decisions will be experienced by those succeeding you, who are under your realm of influence. If it is about family members who are older or equal to you, they would have to make their own decisions, but you can influence them through your prayer. Since we are the current representatives of our family line, we have authority over all vows, dedications, agreements, that were previously made and any changes we make, affect those who come after us.

Q5. Is it necessary to know/seek for the cause/origin of the iniquity, which leads to the generational bondage?

Based on what people have witnessed, in most cases a general renunciation of vows and curses is sufficient to break family bondages and the entrance satan has gained through ancestral vows, dedications, and the like. But in some rare cases, the bondage continues to exist and can be a little deeper and stronger. For this, we need to get to the root of it and discover the specific situation of how it came in and which ancestor gave the enemy authority into the family tree, to reverse specific things. Often, the Holy Spirit reveals the answers to us, or we can get information from those familiar with our family history.

Q6. Do curses influence believers?

The answer is "No." "For *there is no sorcery against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel*" (Numbers 23:23a). However, satan has access to the extent that we allow him to have. For instance, when believers dabble with the occult, walk in fear, or give satan a point of entry into their lives, that makes them vulnerable to demonic activity. So, it is important for believers to walk in obedience to God.

Q7. Why is our God a jealous God?

When you examine Scripture, almost every time we read about God referring to Himself as a jealous God, it is in the context of worshipping other gods or false gods. God is a jealous God when we worship false gods because:

- This violates our primary purpose, which is to worship the living God. We were made to worship Him and Him alone. "*For you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God*" (Exodus 34:14).
- He will not give His glory to another. "*I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to carved images*" (Isaiah 42:8). When someone is ascribing the glory due to God to something else, God cannot tolerate that.
- We are misrepresenting God. It changes God's identity to something created rather than who He really is—the Creator. "*To whom then will you liken me, or to whom shall I be equal?" says the Holy One*" (Isaiah 40:25). For instance, if someone had to take your picture, cut off your head, put a cockroach in it and say it is you, would you like it? You would not be happy about it but "jealous"—meaning you would be angry that they did that. That is what we are doing when we worship a created thing rather than the Creator. It misrepresents God, and so God is jealous.

Q8. Are "Christian idols" also wrong?

Any kind of statue or image that becomes an object of worship, meditation, or devotion—no matter by what name we call it, or whom it represents, is wrong even if it is in a place of Christian worship.

We should not worship or light candles to a statue or a picture of a so-called infant Jesus, teenage Jesus, or middle-aged Jesus! How do you know that the picture is really that of Jesus? It could be someone else's and you may be lighting candles and offering flowers to that person. God says, "*You shall make no image of anything that flies or crawls* …"

It is ridiculous to prefix idols with "Christian" and say that you are worshipping God through it. You worship God only "*in Spirit and in truth*" (John 4:23-24).

Q9. What is wrong in lighting candles?

Lighting a candle by itself is not wrong, only symbolic. We do it for several reasons: for light when the electricity is switched off, during birthdays, as a symbolic gesture of unity during marriages, for better ambience, and the like. However, when this is done as an act of worship to an idol or image, then we are violating the fact that we are to worship in

spirit and truth (John 4:23-24). If you think that God will feel good if you light a candle in front of a picture, or that He will answer your prayers because the flames will take your prayer up to heaven, then you are kidding yourself. The Bible says to worship God in spirit and truth, not with wax and fire!

Q10. My housemate/spouse has idols. Is this going to affect me?

No. The Bible says that we live in a world that is under the control of the wicked one (1 John 5:18-19). Everywhere we go, the presence of evil (demons) is all around us, though we cannot see them. So, living in a home where your roommate or spouse has idols is not going to affect you, so long as you protect yourself with the Word that God has given you. So, you do not have to be afraid. Cleanse yourself, keep your space in the house clean, and you will be fine. The wicked one cannot touch the one who is born of God. Do not give entrance to the wicked one through fear or worship of idols. Remember that the greater One lives in you (1 John 4:4).

Q11. Does God do this (generational bondage) or is it the devil?

Understand that the sins, vows, and dedications of the forefathers opened the doors to demonic influence and bondage. Throughout the Bible, there are passages where God states that He "does" something or will "send sickness, make the deaf and the dumb or send an evil spirit." The correct interpretation of this in the light of the whole Scripture is that God does not "do it" Himself. It is the devil that does it.

There is the providence of God where He preserves every person. Jesus says that God makes His sun to shine on the good and the bad, sends rain on the good and bad. However, when a person violates the will or law of God, he willfully walks into areas where the enemy causes harm, damage, and destruction. You cannot blame God for that. The consequence of a person's action causes one to step out of the providential protection that God provides, thus allowing the devil to exert influence, dominion, and oppression. God allows people to make their own choices and go their own way. Usually the way that people choose, take them into a place where the devil holds them in bondage. God has revealed His identity saying, "*I am the LORD your Healer*." Nowhere, has He said, "I am the LORD, your sickness-giver." To put it in modern terminology, He is your "doctor."

To put it simply, when you are sick do you ever go to your doctor saying, "Doctor! If it be thy most holy will today, if you are in the mood of healing people, and if it is your good pleasure, can you please find out what's wrong with me and do something to make me feel better?" Our implicit expectation when we go to the doctor is that he does everything within his ability and knowledge to make us well, and not worse. But, we have double standards in our relationship with God who said, "I am Jehovah Rapha (your Healer, your Physician), Jehovah Jireh (Provider), Jehovah Nissi (who gives you victory), your Protector,

your Righteousness" and ask Him, "Heal me if it be Thy most Holy will." It is God's will to heal and to bless. When we do not talk to the doctor like that, why do we talk that way to the Lord? Another common example would be that God invites all people to heaven, not to hell and yet people choose hell instead of heaven! God does not send them there and He cannot be blamed for this. So, it is not God who brings generational bondages. It is the work of the devil due to our own sinful deeds.

PREPARATION

- Remove objects of worship that were and are being used. When in doubt, get it out.
- Renounce any involvement in the occult—hypnosis, witchcraft, astrology, horoscopes, mind reading, numerology, palm reading, amulets, charms, birth stones, lucky symbols, talismans, zodiac charms, and heavy metal or rock music—that promotes ungodliness.
- Renounce involvement in false religions (Jehovah's Witnesses, Free Masonry), cults, worship of false gods, and philosophies that are contrary to God's Word.
- Believe in what the Lord Jesus accomplished on the cross and, regardless of what your forefathers were in allegiance to, pledge your allegiance to Christ.
- Commit to total obedience to God.
- Give God your tithes and offerings if you want to be blessed. Obey His Word. Live holy.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you areas that you and your forefathers may be in bondage, to make a note of them, and pray the following prayer to break free from those bondages.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I believe that you died on the cross for me. On the cross, you shed your blood to set me free from every power of the devil. Your blood was shed to set me free from the vain and useless lifestyles and the consequences of such living handed down to me from my forefathers. Today, I claim my freedom because of what you have done for me.

I repent and renounce every sin and rebellion in my life. I receive my freedom from the consequences of my sin and rebellion.

I repent and renounce every sin and rebellion in the lives of my forefathers. I receive my freedom from the consequences of their sin and rebellion.

In the name of Jesus Christ and by the power of His blood, I take authority over every bondage and curse in my life handed down to me from my forefathers. I break every bondage and cancel every curse and all its effects.

I cancel all vows, curses, dedications, sinful deeds, trauma, agreements, pledges of allegiance that have given satan rights of entry either through my father's line or through my mother's, including curses coming from others and self-inflicted curses.

In Jesus' name and by the power of the blood of Christ, I break all the power and influence of the enemy that has affected my life.

I am free, for Jesus has set me free!

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All Peoples Church ministers beyond its own borders as a local church by reaching out all across India, especially North India, with a special focus on (A) Strengthening Leaders, (B) Equipping young people for ministry and (C) Building up the Body of Christ. Several training seminars for young people, and Christian Leaders conferences are held throughout the year. In addition, several thousands of copies of books are distributed free of cost in English and other Indian languages with the purpose of equipping believers in the Word and in the Spirit.

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About All Peoples Church

At All Peoples Church (APC), our vision is to be salt and light in the city of Bangalore and a voice to the nation of India and to the nations of the world.

At APC, we are committed to presenting the complete, uncompromised Word of God in the anointing and demonstration of His Holy Spirit. We believe that good music, creative presentations, brilliant apologetics, contemporary ministry techniques, latest technology, and so on, can never substitute the God-ordained approach of proclaiming the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit with signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:4-5; Hebrews 2:3-4). Our theme is Jesus, our content is the Word, our method is Holy Spirit power, our passion is people, and our goal is Christlike maturity.

With our main base in Bangalore, All Peoples Church has several other church locations in India. To get a current listing and contact information of All Peoples Church locations, please visit our website at **www.apcwo.org/locations** or send an email to **contact@apcwo.org**.

DO YOU KNOW THE GOD WHO LOVES YOU?

About 2000 years ago, God came into this world as a man. His name is Jesus. He lived a perfectly sinless life. Since Jesus was God in flesh, everything He said and did revealed God to us. The words He spoke were the very words of God. The things He did were the actions of God. Jesus did many miracles on the Earth. He healed the sick and suffering. He opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, made the lame to walk and healed every kind of sickness and disease. He fed the hungry by miraculously multiplying a few loaves of bread, calmed the storm and did many other wonderful things.

All of these actions reveal to us that God is a good God who wants people to be well, whole, healthy, and happy. God wants to meet the needs of people.

So why then would God decide to become a man and step into our world? Why did Jesus come?

All of us have sinned and done things that are unacceptable before the God who created us. Sin has its consequences. Sin is like a great unsurpassable wall between God and us. Sin separates us from God. It prevents us from knowing and having a meaningful relationship with the One who created us. Therefore, many of us try to fill this void with other things.

Another consequence of our sins is eternal separation from God. In God's court, the penalty for sin is death. Death is eternal separation from God in hell.

But the good news is that we can be free from sin and be restored to God. The Bible says, "**For the wages [payment] of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23)**. Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world when He died on the cross. Then, three days later He rose again, showed Himself alive to many and then went back into heaven."

God is a God of love and mercy. He does not wish that any person be lost in hell. And so He came, to provide a way for the entire human race to be free from sin and its lasting consequences. He came to save sinners—to rescue people like you and me from sin and eternal death.

To receive this free forgiveness of sins, the Bible tells us that we must do just one thing—accept what the Lord Jesus Christ did on the cross and to believe in Him whole-heartedly.

Acts 10:43
… through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive forgiveness of sins.

Romans 10:9
That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

You too can receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins if you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following is a simple prayer to help you make a decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and what He has done for you on the cross. This prayer will help you express your acceptance of what Jesus has done for you and receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins. This prayer is only a guideline. You can also pray in your own words.

Dear Lord Jesus, today, I have understood what You did for me on the cross. You died for me, You shed Your precious blood and paid the penalty for my sins, so that I could be forgiven. The Bible tells me that whoever believes in You will receive forgiveness for their sins.

Today, I make a decision to believe in You and to accept what You did for me, by dying for me on the cross and rising again from the dead. I know I cannot save myself by my own good works, neither can any other human save me. I cannot earn forgiveness for my sins.

Today, I believe in my heart and say with my mouth that You died for me, You paid the penalty for my sins, You rose again from the dead, and by faith in You, I receive forgiveness and cleansing for my sins..

Thank You Jesus. Help me to love You, to know You more and to be faithful to You. Amen.

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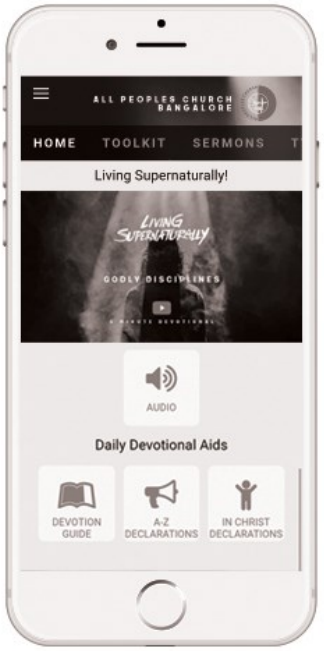

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Some of the problems people face may have the origins in previous generations, because someone may have led a sinful lifestyle or been involved in demonic activity. It is important for us to understand what generational bondages are and how to break them. Our freedom was obtained at the cross. Jesus came to destroy every work of the devil, regardless of how it entered our lives.

This book helps us understand how to identify and break personal and generational bondages. Be free! Live the abundant life that Jesus came to give us!

Ashish Raichur

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